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- ART. I.—1. *The Queen's Wake ; a legendary Poem by James Hogg.*
2. *The Pilgrims of the Sun ; a Poem by James Hogg, author of the Queen's Wake.*
3. *Mador of the Moor ; a Poem by James Hogg, author of the Queen's Wake, &c.*
4. *The Brownie of Bodsbeck ; and other tales by James Hogg, author of the Queen's Wake, &c.*

WE have never given an account of Mr. Hogg's writings, though they are deserving of attention as well from their respectability as from the peculiar circumstances under which the author appeared before the public ; a short notice of the *Queen's Wake*, which did not enter at large into its merits, is all that we find about him on looking over our preceding numbers. Indeed, he seems to have faded fast from the memory of the public, though considerable curiosity was excited by his first appearance : much of that was owing to his obscure situation and narrow means of education ; from which we were surprised to see him break out with so much of the air of an author. It was natural in such a case to expect too much from him, and when he failed to satisfy that expectation, it was equally natural to place him lower than he deserved.

We were told in the publisher's advertisement to the *Queen's Wake*, that it was "the production of James Hogg,

a common shepherd, bred among the mountains of Ettrick Forest, who went to service when only seven years of age, and since that period has never received any education whatever."—The publisher asserted this on his own knowledge, and left the reader to reconcile it as he could with the manner and merits of the poem. This is all we know of Mr. Hogg personally; and we confess we found it hard at first to believe there was not some deception in the representation: for his works, with much simplicity, bear no marks of an illiterate mind. He seems well acquainted with Scottish history and tradition, and manages them for the purposes of poetry with sufficient dexterity and familiarity. He has not only many excellencies, but some faults which we should not have expected from a man of scanty education. He shows nothing of ignorance or awkwardness, and not much of the strength of unpolished genius. Certainly, without the publisher's information, we should not have suspected Mr. Hogg of having either more or less learning than generally enters into the composition of a poet. Yet the fact as stated gave him an imposing introduction, and excited more attention than his poem would have gained by its merit. On a little reflection, however, we were less surprised at it; for even taken in connexion with the very considerable success of his attempts in poetry, it rather proves Mr. Hogg to be a man of ardent curiosity and determined character, than of any very powerful genius. There is no doubt much mind required to overleap the disadvantages of low birth and confined education; and we do right to set a peculiar value on the success of unassisted efforts. But after all, it is no proof of that distinguished genius which is necessary to accomplish much in poetry. Mr. Hogg has done what few would have had the resolution and patience to accomplish; he has acquired considerable information, familiarity with language, and even good taste without the usual helps; this is undoubtedly evidence of some superiority, for no man can overmaster his condition without it. But it does not alone prove a peculiar talent for poetry. In judging of his power of poetry, we must compare him with other poets, and not estimate him by his disadvantages.

It is difficult to determine the effect of education or the want of it on an individual surrounded by its remote influence and warmed by its reflected rays. We know how to judge and what to expect from mind in all its various stages from

savage to civilized ; but it is very uncertain, and much a matter of accident, how far an individual without education may in a cultivated age partake of the refinement of the times. By education we mean, of course, that which is gained from books ; and that makes a small part of the difference between men in different states of society. Perhaps it is the source, or at least the means, of almost all of it ; but the amelioration of manners and refinement of feelings which it produces through the whole mass, extend in a great degree to those who are ignorant of its very elements. Mere learning is very little necessary to pure poetry ; it gives indeed scenery and variety of materials and imagery, but the essential part of poetry has to do with the workings of the heart. Sensibility to moral and external beauty, tenderness, enthusiasm and the creative power of association—these depend much more on the relations of civilized life, the charities of home, and the thousand ties of habit and affection that bind men to the places they have known from childhood, and the friends who grew with them and dwelt with them when their hearts were most susceptible of deep impressions and tender feelings. For this reason, the poetry of every age has a peculiar form and character, varied indeed in some small measure by the cultivation of the individual, but still bearing such general marks of a common mode of thought and feeling as to make it easy to refer it, under almost any circumstances, to its proper period. This character depends as much on the expansion and refinement of the heart as the progress of the understanding. The poetry of a savage or heroic age will always have more sublimity than pathos, more passion and adventure than sentiment or tenderness ; while that of the most uncultivated man in a cultivated age will differ not so much in character as in degree of merit from that of his most learned cotemporaries. For the influence of civilization, on the mass of men, is most on the manners and relations of domestic life, and thus reaches the lowest ranks. An application of this remark to poems that claim a disputed antiquity would, perhaps, more than any thing else assist us in determining their authenticity. The poetry of Ossian, for example, as we now have it, contains many things inconsistent with the state of society it supposes ; taken together it is not the poetry of any age ; and judging it by this rule, we should come to the same result as to its origin with those who have decided on extraneous evi-

dence. With much that belongs to a rude period, it has feelings that could not exist, in a nation of hunters and warriors ; because such a state necessarily hardens one sex and degrades the other. We might safely pronounce that it was not the production of such a period ; and on the other hand, we ought not to be surprised to find the works of a man as illiterate as Mr. Hogg is represented, partaking largely of the refinement of the present school of poetry ; nor attribute that to great talent, of which much is due to the education that all receive now, however unlearned, who have relations and friends and a home.

All this however only shows that it is no wonder, and no mark of extraordinary genius, for an untaught man to write so as not to be detected in his deficiency, while his subjects are those of the imagination ; and that if he avoid learned ground, he may without very uncommon talent reach the common standard of the times. But it is very rare that one without education has done more than this in poetry : those great geniuses who have outstripped the imagination of their age, and left models for those who come after them, have rarely burst out from obscurity and ignorance. The greatest name in English, indeed in any poetry, is found in no school or university ; but he is an exception, not an example : Burns follows next to him, but at what a distance ! and what still more “distant warblings lessen on the ear” from the many obscure poets that have been brought forward in England as curiosities, and, for aught we know of them, are still living in disappointment.

Poetry is eminently the work of genius—and genius we are accustomed to consider the most irrepressible of all things. Yet poetry is perhaps, of all pursuits, that in which an illiterate man is least likely to be original. A person of lively imagination may without much help of education, follow in any track that has been explored by others. Once led into the imaginary world, his fancy is easily waked and filled with the images presented ; he will compound and diversify them almost infinitely ; but he will rarely wander into any new path. He will propose those few as models whose works happen to fall into his hands, because they excite him first ; and he will hardly, without much discipline, be won from the early train of thought to which his imagination clings, as to its birth place ; or aspire to more than to equal those who have

better means than himself. It is so much easier to imitate than to invent, and an ignorant or half taught man is so well satisfied with copying successfully, that he will rarely achieve more. And though we have said that the essential part of poetry is independent of all cultivation, except that of feeling and imagination, yet extensive and especially early education adds to its materials and enlarges its fields so much, that it is vain to expect its highest efforts from men in Mr. Hogg's situation. We must be content if they do well, and give them much praise for it.

We wish we could congratulate Mr. Hogg on his change of occupation as much as we can praise him for his success ; but we fear it cannot be much to his advantage. He seems already, from some lines in the conclusion of the *Queen's Wake*, to have suffered one of the mortifications of an author ; for after expressing his thanks for the assistance he had received from 'Walter the Abbot,' his model and patron, he thus complains :

'O could the bard I loved so long
Reprove my fond aspiring song !
Or could his tongue of candor say
That I should throw my harp away !
Just when her notes began with skill
To sound beneath the southern hill,
And twine around my bosom's core,
How could we part forever more !
'Twas kindness all, I cannot blame,
For bootless is the minstrel flame ;
But sure a bard might well have known
Another's feelings by his own !' p. 217.

To 'throw his harp away' is a counsel that would rarely be well received by a poet ; yet we think it was the kindest Mr. Scott could have given him. For though Mr. Hogg's works are a considerable addition to the stock of agreeable poetry, we fear he has contributed more to our pleasure than his own happiness. We are no great advocates for the superior blessings of a simple and ignorant life ; the higher a man is placed by nature and education in the scale of intellectual beings, he is the more fortunate, and ought to be the more thankful. But we do believe that every one is most likely to be happy in that rank and occupation in which he

was born and bred. The highest and humblest of mankind have perhaps a pretty equal share of happiness, though adapted in kind to their respective capacities and habits. If the most refined and cultivated have the highest enjoyments, the ignorant and unambitious have a tranquillity that is to them a full equivalent. Our busy imaginations bring us all to an equality. But we are all prepared for the situations assigned us, and it is unfortunate if we quit them. We cannot think of the author before us—a shepherd of Ettrick Forest, proud of his little learning and simple minstrelsy—conscious of his superiority to his companions—with a soul awake to all the beauties of nature and familiar with her most beautiful forms—beguiling the leisure of his humble occupation with the lore of tradition and the dreams of imagination—taken from all this, and delivered over to the cares and confinement of authorship, under disadvantages that must make him feel inferior to all his new associates—without fearing that his patrons have greatly failed to consult his true happiness. We do not know much of the fate of the Bloomfields and others, who have been thus injudiciously brought before the public, but we should be much surprised if they were the happier for it. Burns was a fearful example of the effect of such a change; no one who has feeling enough to relish his works ever read his life without deep regret; and no one is worthy to read either who does not think his exquisite poetry too dearly purchased with the ruin of his peace. But to men of meaner genius it is doubly cruel to drag them from obscurity to gratify the wonder of a moment, and thus fill their hearts with an ambition never to be satisfied. We cannot help feeling this solicitude for Mr. Hogg, though remote and unknown to us; for a poet, if he interest us at all, interests us in himself as well as his creations. Swift has said that a historian gives immortality to his subjects, but a poet to himself; still more do we, who live in the same age, claim a common feeling with one whose works are addressed to our hearts and fancies. It is the business of the poet to reveal his own feelings and character, and bring his soul into contact with our own; his spirit animates all he describes. No matter what be the subject, poetry is an appeal from heart to heart, and we cannot but answer it with our sympathy. We know too that the enthusiasm and sensibility that give fervour and brightness to his compositions are working their effect on his own char-

acter and destiny ; he is pouring out before us the gentleness or the bitterness of his own bosom, and cherishing for us mild affections or stormy passions. We should judge Mr. Hogg, from his works, to be amiable and susceptible, alive to all kind feelings, but easily suffering from evils of the imagination. There is a flow and gentleness of heart in his poetry that we should be sorry to see checked by the coldness of the world, or embittered by disappointment ; but we fear he is less fit for the life into which he has been led than for that which he has abandoned.

The *Queen's Wake*, the first of Mr. Hogg's productions, except a volume of *Border tales* which had little reputation, and which we have not seen, is a collection of ballads founded on the traditions of the author's neighbourhood, and connected by an account of a royal *Wake* holden at Edinburgh by Mary Queen of Scots, on her arrival from France ; before whom and her court the ballads are sung by the minstrels of the country. They are of various kinds and degrees of merit ; abounding in witchcraft and all the machinery of a superstitious age. Some are in good English, and some in deep Scotch. Few of them are so told as to excite much interest in the narrative or characters, and the poetical execution is very unequal. There are in all, fine thoughts and beautiful expressions, but they are so scattered and divided by uninteresting matter, that in giving such extracts as do justice to the general character of the book, we should hardly seem doing it to the author's talent. The story of *Kilmeny* is decidedly the best ; it is in the author's own manner, and gives the best notion of the peculiarity of his imagination, which delights in the wild, but light and soft world of fairies and spirits. It is too long to be inserted entire ; but we shall select from it so as to preserve the story and present the most striking parts.

‘ Bonny Kilmeny gaed up the glen ;
But it wasna to meet Duneira's men,
Nor the rosy monk of the isle to see,
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.
It was only to hear the yorlin sing,
And pu' the cress-flower round the spring ;
The scarlet hypp and the hindberrye,
And the nut that hangs frae the hazel tree :
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.

But lang may her minny look o'er the wa',
And lang may she seek i' the green-wood shaw ;
Lang the laird of Duneira blame,
And lang, lang greet or Kilmeny come hame !

‘ When many a day had come and fled,
When grief grew calm, and hope was dead,
When mass for Kilmeny's soul had been sung,
When the bedes-man had prayed, and the dead-bell rung,
Late, late in the gloamin, when all was still,
When the fringe was red on the westlin hill,
The wood was sere, the moon i' the wane,
The reek o' the cot hung over the plain,
Like a little wee cloud the world in its lane ;
When the ingle lowed with an eiry leme,
Late, late in the gloaming Kilmeny came hame ;’

‘ Kilmeny looked up with a lovely grace,
But nae smile was seen on Kilmeny's face ;
As still was her look, and as still was her ee,
As the stillness that lay on the emerant lea,
Or the mist that sleeps on a waveless sea.
For Kilmeny had been she knew not where,
And Kilmeny had seen what she could not declare ;
Kilmeny had been where the cock never crew,
Where the rain never fell, and the wind never blew.
But it seemed as the harp of the sky had rung,
And the airs of heaven played round her tongue,
When she spake of the lovely forms she had seen,
And a land where sin had never been ;
A land of love, and a land of light,
Withouten sun, or moon, or night :
Where the river swa'd a living stream,
And the light a pure celestial beam :
The land of vision it would seem,
A still, an everlasting dream.’

‘ She saw a sun on a summer sky,
And clouds of amber sailing by ;
A lovely land beneath her lay,
And that land had glens and mountains gray ;
And that land had valleys and hoary piles,
And marled seas, and a thousand isles ;
Its fields were speckled, its forests green,
And its lakes were all of the dazzling sheen,
Like magick mirrors, where slumbering lay

The sun and the sky and the clouldlet gray ;
Which heaved and trembled and gently swung,
On every shore they seemed to be hung ;
For they were seen on their downward plain
A thousand times and a thousand again ;
In winding lake and placid firth,
Little peaceful heavens in the bosom of earth.

‘ Kilmeny sighed and seemed to grieve,
For she found her heart to that land did cleave ;
She saw the corn wave on the vale,
She saw the deer run down the dale ;
She saw the plaid and the broad claymore,
And the brows that the badge of freedom bore ;
And she thought she had seen the land before.’

‘ But to sing the sights Kilmeny saw,
So far surpassing nature’s law,
The singer’s voice wad sink away,
And the string of his harp wad cease to play.
But she saw till the sorrows of man were by,
And all was love and harmony ;
Till the stars of heaven fell calmly away,
Like the flakes of snow on a winter day.

‘ Then Kilmeny begged again to see
The friends she had left in her own country,
To tell of the place where she had been,
And the glories that lay in the land unseen ;
To warn the living maidens fair,
The loved of heaven, the spirits’ care,
That all whose minds unmeled remain
Shall bloom in beauty when time is gane.

‘ With distant music, soft and deep,
They lulled Kilmeny sound asleep ;
And when she awakened, she lay her lane,
All happed with flowers in the green-wood wene.
When seven lang years had come and fled ;
When grief was calm, and hope was dead ;
When scarce was remembered Kilmeny’s name,
Late, late in a gloamin Kilmeny came hame !

‘ And O, her beauty was fair to see,
But still and steadfast was her ee !
Such beauty bard may never declare,

For there was no pride nor passion there ;
 And the soft desire of maiden's een
 In that mild face could never be seen.
 Her seymar was the lily flower,
 And her cheek the moss-rose in the shower ;
 And her voice like the distant melodye,
 That floats along the twilight sea.'

' When a month and a day had come and gane,
 Kilmeny sought the greenwood wene ;
 There laid her down on the leaves sae green,
 And Kilmeny on earth was never mair seen.
 But O, the words that fell from her mouth,
 Were words of wonder, and words of truth !
 But all the land were in fear and dread,
 For they kearn'd whether she was living or dead.
 It wasna her hame, and she couldna remain ;
 She left this world of sorrow and pain,
 And returned to the land of thought again.' p. 123.

There is not much poetry in the volume of so high a character as this ; but it bears marks throughout of a light and delicate imagination, and a keen sense of the beauty of nature. Whenever the author draws from the scenery around him, and peoples it with beings of pure imagination, he rises to his highest excellence. We will only add to this long extract a few passages whose merit lies in a small compass : we might take many more, for there is hardly a page that has not some fine thoughts, and yet there is hardly one that is good throughout. It is the great fault of this volume that much beauty of thought and language is wasted without producing much effect. The author seems to have had his mind well stored with the peculiar imagery suggested by his situation, but he has employed it either on unworthy subjects, or in short and intermitted efforts. His poetry has many sparkling passages and some of deep feeling, but the intervals are dark and heavy. *Kilmeny*, the *Witch of Fife*, and perhaps *M' Kinnon*, are the only tales in the book that are well done throughout. The connecting account of *Queen Mary's* court has a few good descriptions, but the volume would have had more merit in proportion to its size, if it had contained the ballads only.

The following is a fine picture of a winter morning.

‘ And lo, the night in still profound
 In fleece of heaven had clothed the ground ;
 And still her furs so soft and fair
 Floated along the morning air.
 Low stooped the pine amid the wood,
 And the tall cliffs of Sal’sbury stood
 Like marble columns bent and riven,
 Propping a pale and frowning heaven.’ p. 59.

‘There is much grandeur in the third of these lines :

‘ Mid wastes that dorn and dreary lie,
 One mountain rears his mighty form,
 Disturbs the moon in passing by,
 And *smiles* above the thunder storm ;’ p. 66.

but any word would have been better than *smiles* in the last.

‘ The stars were wrapt in curtain gray,
 The blast of midnight died away :
 ’Twas just the hour of solemn dread,
 When walk the spirits of the dead.
 * * * * *
 The lake fowl’s wake was heard no more ;
 The wave forgot to brush the shore ;
 Hushed was the bleat on moor and hill ;
 The wandering clouds of heaven stood still.’ p. 90.

‘ The bard was stately, dark and stern,
 ’Twas Drummond from the moors of Ern.
 Tall was his frame, his forehead high,
 Still and mysterious was his eye :
 His look was like a winter day
 When storms and winds have sunk away.’ p. 159.

But the Queen’s Wake is already well known, and we have quoted more than we intended ; enough to show its peculiarities, though not enough to measure its general merit ; for we have preferred selecting its beauties only, because its defects are those of tameness and diffusiveness, and not of bad taste, nor of so striking a character as to admit any particular remark.

Mr. Hogg’s next publication was the Pilgrims of the Sun ; a fanciful imagination of the world of spirits, in which he carries us through the planets and finds regions of reward

and punishment for the good and evil doers of earth. The design is a very old one, but it evidently gives scope to the wildest imagination and opportunity for the grandest description. It is one in which we should have thought, from reading the *Queen's Wake*, that the author would be most successful. In that poem he was so continually struggling

‘ — like heaving thistle down
Hung to the earth by viewless pile,’

that we were glad to see him here fairly afloat and at liberty to follow his own fancy. The substance of the *Pilgrims of the Sun* is this: Mary Lee, a pure and visionary maid, another Kilmeny, while at her evening prayers in the wood, is borne away by an angel and shown all the wonders of heaven. The first part of the poem is taken up with descriptions of Mary and her companion, the manner of their leaving the earth and their journey round it. Passing by the moon,

‘ — they saw her mighty mountain form
Like Cheviot in the setting sun—’

and then, catching a glimpse of the intervening planets, they rest on the mountains of the sun. Here is the author's heaven, and here Mary and Cela her guide stand looking abroad through the system of worlds :

‘ ————— Thence they saw
The motioned universe, that wheeled around
In fair confusion—Raised as they were now
To the high fountain head of light and vision,
Wher'er they cast their eyes abroad, they found
The light behind, the object still before ;
And on the rarified and pristine rays
Of vision borne, their piercing sight passed on
Intense and all unbounded—Onward !—onward !
No cloud to intervene ! no haze to dim !
Or nigh, or distant, it was all the same ;
For distance lessened not.—O what a scene,
To see so many goodly worlds upborne !
Around !—around !—all turning their green bosoms
And glittering waters to that orb of life
On which our travellers stood, and all by that
Sustained and gladdened !’ p. 35.

They find the surface of the sun peopled with spirits just arrived from other worlds after long progression ; who still journey inward toward the centre ; an arrangement neither very intelligible nor convenient. After a sight of the glories of the inner heaven, they return to the surface, where Cela explains all the motions of the spheres.

‘ While thus they stood or lay, (for to the eyes
Of all, their posture seemed these two between,
Bent forward on the wind, in graceful guise,
On which they seemed to press, for their fair robes
Were streaming far behind them) there passed by
A most erratic wandering globe, that seemed
To run with troubled aimless fury on.
The virgin, wondering, inquired the cause
And nature of that roaming meteor world.

‘ When Cela thus—“ I can remember well
When yon was such a world as that you left ;
A nursery of intellect, for those
Where matter lives not.—Like these other worlds,
It wheeled upon its axle, and it swung
With wide and rapid motion. But the time
That God ordained for its existence run.
Its uses in that beautiful creation,
Where nought subsists in vain, remained no more !
The saints and angels knew of it, and came
In radiant files, with awful reverence,
Unto the verge of heaven where we now stand,
To see the downfall of a sentenced world.
Think of the impetus that urges on
These ponderous spheres, and judge of the event.
Just in the middle of its swift career,
Th’ Almighty snapt the golden cord in twain
That hung it to the heaven—Creation sobbed !
And a spontaneous shriek rang on the hills
Of these celestial regions. Down amain
Into the void the outcast world descended,
Wheeling and thundering on ! Its troubled seas
Were churned into a spray, and, whizzing, flurred
Around it like a dew.—The mountain tops,
And ponderous rocks, were off impetuous flung,
And clattered down the steep of night forever.

‘ “ Away into the sunless starless void
Rushed the abandoned world ; and thro’ its caves,

And rifted channels, airs of chaos sung.
 The realms of night were troubled—for the stillness
 Which there from all eternity had reigned
 Was rudely discomposed ; and moaning sounds,
 Mixed with a whistling howl, were heard afar
 By darkling spirits !—Still with stayless force,
 For years and ages, down the wastes of night
 Rolled the impetuous mass !”’ pp. 54—56.

After this they quit the sun, and visit the planets of lovers, warriors, poets, lawyers, priests, and beaux ; of whom we are sorry to see the lawyers the worst lodged. Thence they descend to the world of punishment, and return to the earth. These things are told in a hurried and impatient manner, as if Mr. Hogg were tired of his subject, or unequal to it. He perpetually disappoints us ; his beginnings promise much, but he seems incapable of any continued effort. The manner of the Pilgrims leaving the earth, and their journey upwards, are full of beauty ; but the author seems at a loss what to do with them after he has carried them up, and they drop heavily to earth again. The conclusion of the poem is utterly bad. It seems Mary had fallen on the ground in a trance, when her soul departed on this strange journey, and being found by her friends was buried with great grief and solemnity. On their return from heaven, Cela leads her home ; her mother is in mourning for her death, and does not know her ; they then walk together to the church-yard, where she sees an open grave, and an old monk cutting the rings from her own fingers ; the pain brings back her soul to her body, Cela vanishes, and the monk runs off frightened by her screams. She gets up and goes back to the house, taking her body with her this time, as a credential, and raps at the door :—

‘ O God ! that such a rap should be
 So fraught with ambiguity !’

says Mr. Hogg, and she enters and is acknowledged with joy as Mary Lee. After this she lives some time, the object of love to all the neighbouring chiefs, till there comes a young harper from ‘ Norroway,’ who is, but how we are left to guess, the same Cela, her fellow traveller and guide. They know each other, and as this was truly a match made in heaven, they are married, live happily and have children and grandchildren. Mary dies in good earnest at last and Cela

vanishes again—All this is absurd enough : and Mr. Hogg's notions of heaven are as inconsistent and contradictory as his story. Yet there is much in this poem that redeems its faults. The author seems much more at home in this visionary imagination than in narrative. He has here embodied the fancies that in the *Queen's Wake* often break brightly into his uninteresting ballads ; and attempted a poem of pure description and imagination, in which he succeeds well while he confines himself to it, but he fails as soon as he quits it ; he is never consistent long. This is however the most original of his works ; he has abandoned his model and thought for himself, and of course thought better and felt more warmly.

What gives a peculiar value to Mr. Hogg's poems is, that they are written with simplicity and the genuine feelings of the man. We feel in reading them that we are not deceived by an assumed character ; we recognise them as the lonely musings of a shepherd more familiar with nature than with man. His descriptions have the minuteness, force and naturalness of actual and habitual observation, and his associations are such as he derives from the traditions and superstitions of the forest. His early habits of life seem to have led him, like the Chaldean shepherds, to contemplate the heavens ; he has looked on them with the eye of a poet, and felt as well as observed all their glorious changes—the splendor of sunset, the soft sadness of twilight, the still majesty of the stars, the mild beauty of the moon and the joy of the returning sun—and all are connected in his mind with imaginary beings or the spirits of the dead. He is an imitator, because he is familiar with a few writers only, but he gives evidence of original talent which greater cultivation would perhaps have made independent, though not very powerful.

Since the *Pilgrims of the Sun*, he has published but one poem, *Mador of the Moor*. It is far inferior to the two first and not worth a particular account. It is an imitation of the *Lady of the Lake*, resembling it in the general story, in the incidents, and sometimes a close copy of its descriptions ; but utterly unlike it in interest and grace. It is heavily told in stanzas, and is such poetry as any one may write with due diligence.

On the whole our opinion of Mr. Hogg as a poet is, that he has a decided claim to be called so, and that his poetry is of a high class ; but we do not think him a great poet. When

he succeeds, it is in a difficult and dangerous kind of writing; but his failures are frequent and great. His defects are not all owing to his education, to which, on the contrary, we think he is indebted for the greater part of his beauties. He exhibits no mark of mind that would have been much improved by greater means of improvement; for he has given himself education enough for the indulgence of a visionary imagination, which seems his chief distinction. He has taste and delicacy, but he wants strength and consistency. His range of imagination is very limited and his images often repeated. Yet there is something wild and light in his fancies that excites, though it does not gratify us long; he seems to be weary of dull reality, and often has glimpses of something brighter and better which he cannot grasp. His favourite description, which occurs in each of his poems and is repeated in one, is that of a being, with human feelings and a little more than human power, looking from heaven upon earth, lingering between the glory of the one and the beauty of the other—tracing the winding of the streams and the shadow of the woods—linked to earth by affection and raised above it by destiny. And these are his best efforts; for mere reality with him is cold and uninteresting, yet when he entirely loses sight of it he becomes inconsistent and extravagant. Indeed his genius seems never quite on earth, and never much above it; but sports, like his own fairies, in the dim and shadowy interval. We do not expect much from him in future, though what he has done is valuable; for he has little poetry but upon one subject, and having employed that in the *Pilgrims of the Sun*, it cannot be repeated with advantage. It has almost always been the fortune of authors who have come forward as Mr. Hogg has done, to lose their popularity, because they gained it too cheaply; and we cannot anticipate a better fate for him. Indeed his last poem is a sad falling off, and his first novel, of which we are now to give some account, promises very little.

Not content with imitating Scott in his poetry, Mr. Hogg has ventured in the *Brownie of Bodsbeck* on ground still more peculiarly that author's own; if the prevailing opinion of the origin of the *Tales of my Landlord*, &c. be correct. He has not only adopted the manner of these popular works, but has chosen the same period, and the very events that are

the foundation of *Old Mortality*. In emulation of the author's fame, and in opposition to his representations of the character of the Covenanters and their persecutors, he has undertaken to vindicate the fanatics from some of the reproach cast upon them, and to show Claverhouse—or Clavers as he is here called—as he probably was before he fell into Mr. Scott's hands to be accomplished. How far he has succeeded, may be imagined from the following sketch of the story.

Walter Laidlaw is a substantial farmer, with a high church wife, a gentle and beautiful daughter Katharine, and two sons. The period at which the story commences is soon after the fight at Bothwell Bridge, in which the Covenanters were cut to pieces or dispersed by Claverhouse. A large number of them had taken refuge from his pursuit in the wild borders of Chapelhope, the farm which Walter rented of the Laird of Drummelzier. There they kept as close as possible and endured great privation and suffering; but in spite of their caution they were often seen and heard by the superstitious peasants, who attributed the sights and sounds to the freaks of bogles, fays and brownies. At this time, in consequence of the murder of a priest of the established church and of five of his soldiers whom he had sent to apprehend the murderers, Claverhouse determined to extirpate the whigs from about Chapelhope. Before he arrives however, Walter, who is an honest man of no sect, discovers the retreat of the fugitives by an accidental encounter with two of them—he is entrusted with the secret of their hiding place and their sufferings, and for many days supplies them with food from his own house and flock. The fear of Claverhouse obliges him to conceal this even from his family, and the Brownie of Bodsbeck, a familiar spirit who was supposed to haunt the neighbourhood, is charged with plundering the pantry which is robbed by Walter himself to feed the Covenanters. This immense consumption of bannocks, with the fright of a young Kennedy, who fell accidentally into the congregation while at their midnight psalms under ground, infects the whole household with superstitious terrors. An old room in the house soon gets the reputation of being haunted from the sounds that are heard in it, and Walter himself cannot resist the belief. Katharine had been sometime suspected of holding communication with evil spirits, and her conduct now confirms her mother in the opinion so

strongly as to frighten her into a fever, and seriously alarms Walter for her soul's good. Things at last come to such a pass in Chapelhope that all the servants desert the house, except an old half crazy woman. Walter is in great trouble about his crops and his daughter; his wife is given over to superstition and helplessness, and Katharine alone is as active and useful as ever, though there is still something of mystery in her appearance and conduct.

Claverhouse arrives at Chapelhope with fifty dragoons to begin the search for the Covenanters; after insulting the old lunatic Nanny and offering rudeness to Katharine, who is rescued by the sturdy Walter, he proceeds to question his wife, his sons and shepherd; getting no information, he contents himself with branding the shepherd and cutting off his ears, and carries away Walter a prisoner on suspicion and in revenge for his resistance. Claverhouse goes on ravaging the country and shooting the Covenanters, taking Walter with him, who by the advice of sergeant Mac Pherson, one of his guards who had claimed kindred with him through an interminable line of Highland ancestors, sends word to Katharine to apply to the Laird of Drummelzier for his liberation on security. Here are many pages filled with accounts of Claverhouse's bloody proceedings, which are given with an air of authenticity, but have no relation to the story in hand. It seems, however, one of the author's principal objects to set this matter right, and he cares little how he brings it in. He appears himself to be almost a believer in the assistance given by the devil to Claverhouse and his black horse:

‘Often has the present relater of this tale stood over the deep green marks of that courser's hoof, many of which remain on that hill, in awe and astonishment to think that he was actually looking at the traces made by the devil's foot, or at least by a horse that once belonged to him.’

In the mean time at Chapelhope, Walter's wife engages Clerk, a church priest, to dispossess Katharine of the evil spirits with whom she was supposed to be connected. Clerk has his own reasons for undertaking it, and stipulates that for that purpose he must pass a night with her alone in the Old Room; he is accordingly locked up with her, and Katharine then finds herself in the power of a determined libertine. All the mercy she can obtain from him is a delay of an hour and a half.

‘The hour of midnight was now passed,—the sand had nearly run out for the second time since the delay had been acceded to, and Clerk had been for a while tapping the glass on the side, and shaking it, to make it empty its contents the sooner. Katharine likewise began to eye it with looks that manifested some degree of perturbation ; she clasped the Bible, and sate still in one position, as if listening attentively for some sound or signal. The worthy curate at length held the hour-glass up between her eye and the burning lamp,—the last lingering pile of sand fell reluctantly out as he shook it in that position,—anxiety and suspense settled more deeply on the lovely and serene face of Katharine ; but instead of a flexible timidity, it assumed an air of sternness. At that instant the cock crew,—she started,—heaved a deep sigh, like one that feels a sudden relief from pain, and a beam of joy shed its radiance over her countenance. Clerk was astonished,—he could not divine the source or cause of her emotions, but judging from his own corrupt heart, he judged amiss. True however to his point, he reminded her of her promise, and claimed its fulfilment. She deigned no reply to his threats or promises, but kept her eye steadfastly fixed on another part of the room. He bade her remember that he was not to be mocked, and in spite of her exertions, he lifted her up in his arms, and carried her across the room towards the bed. She uttered a loud scream, and in a moment the outer door that entered from the bank was opened, and a being of such unearthly dimensions entered as you may never wholly define. It was the Brownie of Bodsbeck, sometimes mentioned before, small of stature, and its whole form utterly mis-shaped. Its beard was long and gray, while its look, and every lineament of its face, were indicative of agony—its locks were thin, dishevelled, and white, and its back hunched up behind its head. There seemed to be more of the species of haggard beings lingering behind at the door, but this alone advanced with a slow majestic pace. Mass John uttered two involuntary cries, somewhat resembling the shrill bellowings of an angry bull, mixed with inarticulate rumblings,—sunk powerless on the floor, and, with a deep shivering groan, fainted away. Katharine, stretching forth her hands, flew to meet her unearthly guardian ;—“Welcome, my watchful and redoubted Brownie,” said she ; “thou art well worthy to be familiar with an empress, rather than an insignificant country maiden.”

“Brownie’s here, Brownie’s there,
Brownie’s with thee every where,”

said the dwarfish spirit and led her off in triumph.’ pp. 86, 87.

The next morning Katharine meets Clerk as if nothing

extraordinary had happened, and he through shame and fear conceals his defeat. Walter's letter now arrives, in which he charges Katharine to hasten to Drummelzier to procure his liberty. She feels the immediate necessity of complying, but there is some inexplicable tie that keeps her at home—if she stays, her father's fate is dreadfully uncertain—if she goes, ruin from some mysterious source threatens the whole family. At last she resolves to try whether she can trust old Nanny—she finds her as usual soliloquizing and singing in an incoherent strain; Katharine explains to her the necessity of her leaving home and of delegating to her the care of the familiar spirit. Nanny on this falls into such a fit of terror, that Katharine substitutes the alternative of admitting some of the fugitive Covenanters into the house every night, whose presence will control the power of the evil spirits. This information, from the mouth of one who dealt with the powers of darkness, throws Nanny into a fanatical extacy that gives some light upon her mysterious character:

“An’ can the presence o’ ane o’ them do this?” said Nanny, starting up and speaking in a loud eldritch voice. “Then heaven and hell acknowledges it, an’ the earth maun soon do the same! I knew it!—I knew it!—I knew it!—ha, ha, ha, I knew it!—Ah! John, thou art safe!—Ay! an’ mae than thee; an’ there will be mae yet! It is but a day! an’ dark an’ dismal though it be, the change will be the sweeter! Blessed, blessed, be the day! None can say of thee that thou died like a fool, for thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters.” Then turning close round to Katharine, with an expression of countenance quite indescribable, she added in a quick maddened manner,—“Eh? Thou seekest a test of me, dost thou? Can blood do it?—Can martyrdom do it?—Can bonds, wounds, tortures, and mockery do it?—Can death itself do it? All these have I suffered for that cause *in this same body*; mark that; for there is but one half of my bone and my flesh here. But words are nothing to the misbelieving—mere air mouthed into a sound. Look at this for a test of *my* sincerity and truth.” So saying, she gave her hand a wild brandish in the air, darted it at her throat, and snapping the tie of her cap that she had always worn over her face, she snatched it off, and turning her cheek round to her young mistress, added, “Look there for your test, and if that is not enough, I will give you more!”

Katharine was struck dumb with astonishment and horror. She saw that her ears were cut out close to the skull, and a C. R.

indented on her cheek with a hot iron, as deep as the jaw-bone. She burst out a crying—clasped the old enthusiast in her arms—kissed the wound and steeped it with her tears, and without one further remark, led her away to the Old Room, that they might converse without interruption.’ pp. 94, 95.

Katharine under the escort of a shepherd youth reaches Drummelzier, and finds the laird a royalist, but a man of humanity and the enemy of Claverhouse; he gives her a bond of security for Walter’s appearance and takes other measures to procure his release. She returns home in four or five days and finds Chapelhope utterly deserted. During her absence, Clerk had been compelled by the good wife of Chapelhope to make one more trial with the spirits of the Old Room—it ended in his being carried off by the Brownie; and poor Nanny, who was a secret witness of the scene, saw in the deformed little spirit some one connected with her own fate, and lost the little wit and courage that were left her. In the mean while all is neglected at Chapelhope from the absence of the master and the terrors of the servants; there are the corn to gather and the sheep to smear, and no one to do it. Katharine however goes on quietly, and at last, to the astonishment of all in two nights the corn is cut, and soon after the sheep are smeared with a despatch that could only be the work of Brownie. While this is going on at Chapelhope, Walter is carried to Edinburgh, tried and acquitted—on his way home, by a dim moonlight and in a wild spot, he is twice accosted by what he thinks supernatural beings and warned not to approach his house—when he arrives there he finds all dark and deserted; but peeping into the Old Room, he sees Katharine sitting on the bed with a corpse on her knee, and the little misshapen Brownie of Bodsbeck standing over the body, busy in some horrid spell. At this sight Walter runs off to a neighbouring farm house, and bewails his dear Keatie as given over to the devil. The next morning he returns to Chapelhope and is received by Katharine with tears of affection and distress; he insists on a full confession—this she refuses a long time, but at last carries him to a wild cavern where he finds a company of the persecuted Covenanters, and among them a little deformed old man, John Brown by name, a historical personage it seems, and the husband of old Nanny, who had played the part of the Brownie, and with his companions wrought all the miracles

attributed to him, in gratitude for the protection and support they had received from Katharine. And thus the story is hurried to a conclusion.

It will be seen from this sketch that the chief interest of the *Brownie of Bodsbeck* must be in its characters and descriptions; and they are managed so as to make it go off tolerably well. The incidents are neither new nor striking. Indeed what surprises us most in Mr. Hogg's works is that he is content to imitate so servilely; our readers will easily trace several parts of the story to their source in the late Scotch novels; and there is not a character of any consequence that has not its prototype in some one of them: Walter is a new edition of Farmer Dinmont, Nanny is very like Elspeth, the *Brownie* is drawn from Elshender the Black Dwarf, the Goodwife of Clapelhope is a better sort of Mause Headrigg, and John Hay, as far as he is any thing, reminds us of Cuddie—the character of Katharine is more original but faintly marked.* Claverhouse is here less of the hero and more of the ruffian than in *Old Mortality*. He has little to do with the course of the story, which might have gone on well enough without him; but the author does not seem so much stepping out of his way, when he quits his story to tell the traditions of his persecutions of the Covenanters, as to be following the main design of the work. He has given us many anecdotes on this subject that are still current in the neighbourhood, but he has not woven them ingeniously into his tale, nor communicated to them interest enough by their connexion with his characters to produce much effect on the imagination. In settling the merits of the controversy they have the force of so much traditional testimony, but they have acquired no more hold on our feelings than if they had been told as cold matter of history. Scott, on the contrary, has blended with the ferocity of Claverhouse so much of chivalry, and opposed his lofty spirit and manners so skilfully to the fierce fanaticism and vulgar superstition of the Covenanters, that we are hardly able to do justice to either. Judging however as well as we are able, we should think Mr. Hogg had given,

* Since writing this article we have seen a paragraph from an English publication asserting confidently that the *Brownie of Bodsbeck* was written long before the publication of the *Tales of my Landlord*, and suggesting that Mr. Hogg is the author of at least a part of one of them; both these suppositions seem extremely improbable.

though a far less spirited, a more just account of the temper of those times. But however good be his cause, he fights against hopeless odds ; and if he should write half a dozen such works as this, and collect all the traditions of Claverhouse's cruelties and vulgarity, we should still remember him as the handsome, dashing hero of Old Mortality.

We lay aside Mr. Hogg's books with much respect for him ; for his success under his disadvantages is very praiseworthy. There seem however to be insurmountable difficulties in the way of his being a powerful or a popular writer. His poetry is better than his prose, and in the lightest kind of that he might succeed very well ; but even a long ballad seems to exhaust his force. We may say with certainty he will never be a good novel writer ; he has neither enough invention nor knowledge of the world. But he has so much good feeling that we cannot help again wishing him a better employment.



ART. II.—*American Medical Botany, with Coloured Engravings.* By Jacob Bigelow, M. D. Mem. Amer. Acad. Arts and Sciences, American Philosophical Society, &c. Rumford Professor, and Lecturer on Mat. Med. and Botany in Harvard University. Vol. I. Part II. Vol. II. Part I. Boston, Cummings & Hilliard, 1819.

THE appearance of the third number of Dr. Bigelow's work has completed one half of his present inquiries on the medical botany of this country. We have in a former number offered an analysis of the first half volume of this work, and avail ourselves of the opportunity afforded by the publication of the third, to say something of its progress, and of the character under which it has advanced. It was natural for the author when arrived at this part of his work, to look back on what he had done, and while reviewing his progress, to say something of the prospects of his undertaking. 'It gives him pleasure, he remarks, to state, that the reception of his work, in all parts of the United States, has exceeded his anticipations, that the subscription is already more than sufficient to defray the expenses of publishing, and that its regular increase renders it probable that the whole edition will be taken up at an early period.'